



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO  
STANDARD PRACTICE

NO 14-1.32

ISSUE SEPT. 2001

Medical Records

PAGE 1 OF 3

BY Supervisor

EFFECTIVE 3/00

APPROVED

DEPARTMENT

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

SUBJECT

MEDICAL RECORDS REQUIRING SPECIAL HANDLING

Rudy Lopez, Director

I. PURPOSE

For the protection of the County of San Bernardino, Department of Behavioral Health, their staff and consumers.

II. POLICY

- A. There are two classes of Medical Records requiring Special Handling. There is a SENSITIVE Medical Record and a HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL Medical Records. See the Procedure section for the two different criteria and how each will be handled.
- B. The staff of the County of San Bernardino and/or the Department of Behavioral Health will inform the Medical Record Supervisor when there is a need, beyond the normal rules and regulations, to classify a Medical Record as SENSITIVE or HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL. See Criteria for each.
- C. To protect the privacy of a HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL Medical Record, any staff or non-staff may notify the Medical Record Supervisor directly or through the staff provider.

III. PROCEDURE

A. CRITERIA FOR A SENSITIVE MEDICAL RECORD IS AS FOLLOWS:

- 1. Behavioral Health Medical Records of all minors will be classified as Sensitive.
- 2. Behavioral Health Medical Records of clients that contain information given in confidence by the family of the client will be classified as Sensitive.
- 3. Behavioral Health Medical Records of clients with a specific reason (which will be decided on an individual basis by the staff provider and/or by Management) will be classified as Sensitive.
- 4. Sensitive information is information the release of which is likely to result in legal or other administrative or organizational harm to the client or others who have recorded this information.
- 5. All OADP Medical Records are automatically considered Sensitive and do not need a Sensitive form attached to the chart. If the OADP staff provider wishes to take extra precautions, they will instruct clerical staff to attach the Sensitive form to the chart.

B. PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING OF SENSITIVE MEDICAL RECORDS WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:

1. The staff provider will make the determination if a chart will be classified as Sensitive and will complete a Sensitive Chart form for the chart. See attachment for sample Sensitive Chart form.
2. The staff provider will inform the appropriate Clerical staff and give them the completed Sensitive Chart form to attach to the chart. See attachment for sample Sensitive Chart form.
  - a. Open Chart: Attach Sensitive Chart form on top of section 5, Legal /Correspondence.
  - b. Closed Chart: Attach Sensitive Chart form on top of yellow Episode Cover Sheet.
3. When a request for release is received, the staff designated on the Sensitive Chart form will be asked to review the chart. The staff review must be complete in 2 days. A request for release should be answered in 7 working days and additional clerical time is used in receiving, routing and answering the request.
  - a. Release from Open Chart: The person handling the release will follow instructions for review of the chart by Clinical staff and/or contact the Medical Record Supervisor for assistance before release.
  - b. Release from Closed Chart: The Medical Record staff will follow the instructions for review of the chart by Clinic staff and/ or contact the Medical Record Supervisor for assistance before release.
4. Sensitive Medical Records will be filed with the regularly filed Medical Records.

C. CRITERIA FOR HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL MEDICAL RECORDS WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Behavioral Health Medical Records of employee(s) or employee family members for the County of San Bernardino and/or the Department of Behavioral Health are Highly Confidential. These Highly Confidential Medical Records will be locked in a special Confidential file in the Medical Record Section.
2. To identify and to protect the privacy of a HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL Medical Record, anyone may notify the Medical Record Supervisor directly or through the staff provider.

D. PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING OF HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:

1. When informed the Medical Record Supervisor will place the chart in the locked Confidential File in the Medical Record Section. It is not indicated in any way on a Medical Record that it is classified as Highly Confidential. An Outguide is entered into the permanent file that a chart is in the (locked) Confidential File.
2. When a release is received on a chart in the Confidential file, the request will be given to the Medical Record Supervisor.
3. The Medical Record Supervisor will determine, or if it is required or necessary, will contact the appropriate person to approve or deny the Release of Information.

ATTACH TO TOP FRONT OF EPISODE

PRINT ON BRIGHTLY COLORED PAPER

# SENSITIVE CHART

THIS CHART REQUIRES SPECIAL HANDLING !

If a Request is received for information from this chart, do NOT Release Information before requesting review and/or approval of the attending doctor or clinician listed below. Discuss any legal questions with the Medical Record Supervisor.

Staff requesting Sensitive Status: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

JAN 2001

Attachment to SPM 14-1 32

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Clinic Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS:

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JAN 2001

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